

South Dakota National Guard

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Interagency medevac training earns regional award

DENVER – The Great Plains Interagency Dispatch Center was awarded a 2014 Regional Forester Honor Award presented by the Rocky Mountain Region of the U.S. Forest Service in Denver on Tuesday, April 21, for excellence in medical evacuation training.

The award was presented to the Great Plains Interagency Medevac Training Group for outstanding achievement in planning and training for medevac preparedness during fires and other emergencies in order to provide increased coordination between agency employees and partners.

Agency partners include the Black Hills and Nebraska National Forests, Great Plains Dispatch, South Dakota Wildland Fire, South Dakota National Guard and Black Hills Life Flight.

The honor was earned in the safety category of the Forester's awards, which are presented annually by the U.S. Forest Service. The Forester awards recognize partner organizations and employees who significantly contribute to the U.S. Forest Service mission to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.

Representatives from several of the GPIDC partners were on hand to receive the award.

The GPIDC, along with other forest personnel and partners, first developed the medevac training session in the spring of 2011, and it's been conducted annually ever since.

The training program includes how to coordinate medical emergencies, hands-on demonstrations of patient packaging and extraction techniques, patient assessment, radio frequency management, familiarization with the GPIDC medevac plan and hands-on training with helicopters from the Black Hills National Forest, South Dakota National Guard and Black Hills Life Flight.

About 30 participants took part in the initial year of training. By 2014, participation has grown to nearly 200 participants from multiple federal, state and private agencies. Participants include firefighters, wilderness crews, park service rangers, front-liners, aviation personnel and dispatchers, among others.

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High resolution photos are available upon request.



150421-Z-ZZ999-001: Members of the Great Plains Interagency Dispatch Center are awarded a 2014 Regional Forester Honor Award by the Rocky Mountain Region of the U.S. Forest Service in Denver, Colo., April 21, 2015, for excellence in medical evacuation training. Pictured from left to right: Jerry Krueger, Black Hills National Forest, Maribeth Gustafson, deputy Regional Forester, Brain Ferebee, deputy Regional Forester, Jim Pitts, Nebraska National Forest supervisor, Callia Scott, South Dakota Wildland Fire, Cassie Christy, South Dakota Wildland Fire, Maj. Michael Flanery, South Dakota National Guard, Cheryl Fox, Black Hills National Forest, Craig Bobzien, Black Hills National Forest supervisor, and Dan Jiron, Regional Forester. (U.S. Forest Service photo/Released)



140625-Z-CW157-215: Sgt. 1st Class Greg Holland, Company D, 1-112th Aviation Regiment, South Dakota Army National Guard, secures a mannequin to hoist into a helicopter with the assistance of Jim Lawson, U.S. Forest Service regional helicopter operations specialist, during the fourth annual Great Plains Interagency Dispatch Center medevac training near Pactola Reservoir, S.D., June 25, 2014. The training allows various agencies to learn their roles when someone needs to be extracted by helicopter in the Black Hills National Forest. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen/Released)



140625-Z-CW157-275: Sgt. Michael Severin, Company C, 1-189th Aviation Regiment, South Dakota Army National Guard, operates the hoist from inside a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter to extract a mannequin from Sgt. 1st Class Greg Holland, Company D, 1-112th Aviation Regiment, during the fourth annual Great Plains Interagency Dispatch Center medevac training near Pactola Reservoir, S.D., June 25, 2014. The training allows various agencies to learn their roles when someone needs to be extracted by helicopter in the Black Hills National Forest. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Theanne Tangen/Released)

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